



On-Demand Writing

Sample Released Writing Prompts with Annotated
Student Responses and Multiple-Choice Items
Spring 2008



Grade 5





Sample Released Writing Prompts with Annotated Student Responses and Multiple-Choice Items Spring 2008

This document contains released writing tasks and multiple-choice items from the Spring 2008 Kentucky Core Content Test.

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Kentucky Writing Scoring Rubric

0	1	2	3	4
CONTENT				
Purpose and Audience; Idea Development and Support				
<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks awareness of audience <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks idea development; may provide random details 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to establish a general purpose; lacks focus <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates limited awareness of audience's needs <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited idea development with few details and/or weak support; may attempt to apply some characteristics of the genre 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose; some lapses in focus <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates some awareness of audience's needs; makes some attempt to communicate with an audience; may demonstrate some voice and/or tone <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some idea development with details/support; support may be unelaborated, irrelevant and/or repetitious; may apply some characteristics of the genre 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains an authentic focused purpose throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates an awareness of audience's needs; communicates adequately with audience; conveys voice and/or appropriate tone <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates depth of idea development with specific, sufficient details/support; applies characteristics of the genre 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains an authentic and insightful focused purpose throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates a strong awareness of audience's needs; communicates effectively with audience; sustains distinctive voice and/or appropriate tone <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates reflective, analytical and/or insightful idea development; provides specific, thorough support; skillfully applies characteristics of the genre
0	1	2	3	4
STRUCTURE				
Organization: unity and coherence; Sentences: structure and length				
<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates random organization <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks transitional elements <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates incorrect sentence structure throughout 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ineffective or weak organization <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited and/or ineffective transitional elements <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some ineffective or incorrect sentence structure 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical organization with lapses in coherence <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some effective transitional elements <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates simple sentences; may attempt more complex sentences but lacks control of sentence structure 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical, coherent organization <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical, effective transitional elements throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates careful and/or subtle organization that enhances the purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates varied and subtle transitional elements throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control, variety and complexity in sentence structure to enhance meaning
0	1	2	3	4
CONVENTIONS				
Language: grammar and usage, word choice; Correctness: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation and documentation				
<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates lack of control in grammar and usage <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates incorrect or ineffective word choice <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates lack of control in correctness 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some control of grammar and usage with some errors that do not interfere with communication <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates simplistic and/or imprecise word choice <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some control of correctness with some errors that do not interfere with communication 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some control of grammar and usage with some errors that do not interfere with communication <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates acceptable word choice appropriate for audience and purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of correctness relative to length and complexity 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of grammar and usage to enhance meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates accurate, rich and/or precise word choice appropriate for audience and purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of correctness to enhance communication 	

Writing Task Directions

This part of the test contains two writing tasks. Read the two writing tasks carefully. Choose ONE of the writing tasks to complete. You will have 60 minutes to complete this task. You may not work or conference with anyone.

- Think about what you want to write.
- Use your Writer's Reference Sheet to guide you in planning, revising, and editing your response.
- Use a prewriting/planning activity such as making notes, outlining, webbing, mapping, clustering, or brainstorming on paper provided by your teacher.
- Review the scoring criteria on the following page. These criteria will be used to score your work.
- Write a draft on paper provided by your teacher.
- Revise and edit your draft. You may use a dictionary and/or thesaurus.
- Write the FINAL copy in the space provided in your Student Response Booklet (Writing – Part B).

REMEMBER: The prewriting/planning activities will NOT be scored. Only your final copy in your Student Response Booklet will be scored. DO NOT WRITE ANY ANSWERS IN THIS TEST BOOKLET. WHEN YOU FINISH, DO NOT WORK ON ANY OTHER PART OF THE TEST.

Writer's Reference Sheet

Follow the steps below to help you successfully write your response.

Focusing

- ✓ Read the task to identify your purpose and audience and the form of writing you should use.
- ✓ Think about information you may have (personal experiences, current issues, and your knowledge about this topic) that will help you fulfill the purpose in your response to the task and meet the needs of the audience.

Prewriting

- ✓ After reading the task and focusing your thinking, begin to plan what you will write.
 - Select and narrow your topic.
 - Focus on your purpose by identifying a central/controlling idea.
 - Identify your audience's needs.
 - Generate and organize your ideas and support. (You may use graphic organizers.)

Drafting

- ✓ Write a first draft of your response to the task on paper provided by your teacher.

Revising

- ✓ Be sure to review your writing for the following:
 - Focus and attention to purpose and audience
 - Development of ideas, details, and support
 - Clear organization, with transitions as necessary
 - Variety of sentence structures

Editing

- ✓ Review your writing and correct any errors in sentence structure, word choice, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Publishing

- ✓ The final draft of your response must be written in your Student Response Booklet.

As you revise, ask yourself these important questions.

When I organized my writing, did I

- include an attention-getting lead (such as a quote, a question, or a statement)?
- develop the body (with supporting details, transitions, and paragraphs)?
- conclude effectively (by referring back to the lead, asking the audience to take action, leaving the audience something to think about, etc.)?

If it is a letter, have I

- used the correct letter form (business or friendly)?
- supported my purpose with details?
- answered my audience's anticipated questions?

If it is an editorial, have I

- given my opinion?
- supported my opinion with reasons?
- given examples, statistics, stories, etc., to support each reason?

If it is an article, have I

- focused on an interesting angle of the topic?
- supported my purpose with relevant idea development?
- used text features effectively (sections with headings, bulleted lists, etc.)?

If it is a speech, have I

- met the needs of my audience?
- supported my purpose with details that will engage the audience?

Remember to print or write neatly.

Grade 5 On-Demand and Multiple-Choice Overview

Grade 5 On-Demand Writing Information

The on-demand writing tasks are designed to assess students' abilities to use appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information given a specific audience, purpose, and form for the piece of writing. Common purposes include persuading, narrating an event for a transactive purpose, and informing. Common forms of written responses at grade 5 include letters and articles.

Narrate an Event for a Transactive Purpose

Students will use narration (a story or an account) in order to support an idea, opinion, conclusion, interpretation, request, etc. The storyline, which could be based on the student's experience, **is a way of developing the writing in order to accomplish a realistic, transactive purpose.**

All writing for the on-demand writing test is transactive in nature, so when students develop their writing by using narration, their purpose is **not** to complete, for example, a personal narrative. The story is a **means of helping students inform/persuade readers to accept their ideas, opinions, conclusions, etc.** The story is **one form of support and idea development** available to the writer in accomplishing his or her purpose.

Some ways to indicate this purpose:

- "Tell about a time . . ."
- "Refer to your own experience and . . ."
- "From your own experience, relate an incident that . . ."

Persuade

Students will write in order **to convince the reader to take some action or to accept the writer's idea, request, opinion, conclusion, interpretation, plan, recommendation, etc.** Providing readers with appropriate information may well be a part of the persuasive writing, but student writers also should remember that their purpose is **to convince the reader to agree with the writer's ideas or to take the action the writer advocates.**

Students should show awareness of their audience in developing the persuasive writing. They should develop the writing in ways to convince the reader. Some ways to indicate this purpose:

- "Convince readers to . . ."
- "Write to help others accept your opinion about . . ."
- "Urge readers to . . ."

Inform

Students will write in order **to present information and provide explanation that can help readers understand something relevant to students’ lives and experiences (e.g., issue, problem, need, event) or to accomplish a task/procedure, achieve a goal, solve a problem, etc.**

Students should be reminded that merely providing information is not enough for writing such as that called for in the on-demand writing test. Explanation (idea development) is needed. In writing to inform, students should reveal their thinking and their ability to communicate effectively with readers. Writing to inform, then, will provide explanation, information, and other support to accomplish a realistic purpose. In developing the writing, students should show their ability to communicate effectively with readers, not merely repeat information they have learned, as in writing to demonstrate learning to the teacher.

Some ways to indicate this purpose:

- “Help readers understand that . . . ”
- “Share your knowledge . . . ”
- “Provide information that will . . . ”

Multiple-Choice Writing Assessment Information

The multiple-choice assessment is comprised of 12 items that address the Revising and Editing components of the Writing Process subdomain of the Writing Core Content for Assessment 4.1.

Grade 5 Prompt with Student Responses

Inform: Letter

Sample Writing Task

Situation:

Your school is taking part in National Safety Week. During this time, students will focus on safety issues at school.

Writing Task:

Write a letter to inform your principal about a situation at school that you think is a safety problem. Be sure to include specific details about the problem.

Academic Expectations: 1.11 Students write using appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.

Core Content Code:

WR-E-1.1.0

Purpose/Audience: Students will establish and maintain a focused purpose to communicate with an authentic audience by

- Narrowing the topic to create a specific purpose for writing
- Establishing a controlling idea, theme, or conclusion about the topic
- Choosing a perspective authentic to the writer
- Analyzing and addressing the needs of the intended audience
- Adhering to the characteristics of the form
- Applying a suitable tone
- Allowing voice to emerge when appropriate

See Core Content Code WR-05-1.1.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-E-1.2.0

Idea Development/Support: Students will support main ideas and deepen the audience's understanding of purpose by

- Developing logical, justified, and suitable explanations
- Providing relevant elaboration
- Explaining related connections or reflections
- Applying idea development strategies appropriate for the form

See Core Content Code WR-05-1.2.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-E-2.3.0

Organization: Students will create unity and coherence to accomplish the focused purpose by

- Engaging the audience
- Establishing a context for reading when appropriate
- Communicating ideas and support in a meaningful order
- Applying transitions and transitional elements to guide the reader through the piece
- Developing effective closure

See Core Content Code WR-05-2.3.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-E-2.4.0

Sentence Structure: Students will create effective sentences by

- Applying a variety of structures and lengths
- Developing complete and correct sentences unless using unconventional structures for an intentional effect when appropriate

See Core Content Code 05-2.4.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-E-3.5.0

Language: Students will exemplify effective language choices by

- Applying correct grammar and usage
- Applying concise use of language
- Incorporating strong verbs, precise nouns, concrete details, and sensory details
- Applying language appropriate to the content, purpose, and audience

See Core Content Code 05-3.5.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-E-3.6.0

Correctness: Students will communicate clearly by

- Applying correct spelling
- Applying correct punctuation
- Applying correct capitalization
- Incorporating acceptable departure from standard correctness to enhance meaning when appropriate
- Incorporating appropriate documentation of ideas and information from outside sources (e.g., citing authors or titles within the text, listing sources)

Student Response

Score: 4-3-3

Dear Mrs.,

As you know National Safety Week is coming soon. I have lots of ideas but I have narrowed it down to the final three most important ones. I am sure many students have wrote to you about this. I am just giving some suggestions to make our school a safer place for the students at

My first suggestion is to have faster practice drills. If we are not fast enough when practicing we will probably not be fast enough in the real thing if it ever happens we could get seriously injured. I suggest that we have drills at least twice a month. When we are having practice drills one of the school employees should time us. We should set a time limit. If we do not beat the time limit we should practice until we get close to or beat the time limit. We need to make sure everyone is ready in case of an emergency.

My next concern is having concrete hallways. I think that we should not have concrete hallways because they are very slippery & that can cause people to fall. When they fall they can get seriously hurt because the floor is so hard. My suggestion is that we put a very thin layer of rubber or foam

Student Response

Score: 4-3-3

padding over the floor. That would be a lot less slippery + if someone does fall they would fall on something comfortable + it would be a lot less painful.

My last safety issue is that the school requires a parent to show their I.D. + their child's birth certificate when their child is a pick-up. When they are picking up their child they can prove that is their child. This prevents kidnappers or murder's from taking children. They should show these things until the school is familiar with the parent. If for some reason the parent cannot come + pick up their child + they have to send a grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc. They should send + sign a note to prove the relationship + reason. They should also send + sign note if their child is going with a friend.

Mrs. I thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I really appreciate your patience.

4 Content

The writer establishes an authentic and insightful purpose in the first paragraph by indicating her reason for writing the letter (“As you know National Safety Week is coming soon. I have lots of ideas but I have narrowed it down to the final three most important ones”). The audience senses that the response will be insightful and focused because the writer states that she will discuss the “three most important” safety problems at her school. The writer maintains an authentic purpose by identifying specific safety problems and supporting her discussion with specific and relevant details. The writer articulates these problems, which include the speed at which practice drills are completed and the number of drills, the presence of concrete hallways that are slippery and hard, and the necessity of keeping children safe from harm at pick-up time. After identifying these problems, the writer offers sensible solutions (e.g., “My next concern is having concrete hallways,” “My suggestion is that we put a very thin layer of rubber or foam padding over the floor”).

The writer indicates a strong awareness of the audience’s needs by providing specific information that identifies and supports the purpose and ideas in the letter (“As you know National Safety Week is coming soon,” “I am just giving some suggestions to make our school a safer place for the students,” “My last safety issue is that the school requires a parent to show their I.D. & their child’s birth certificate when their child is a pick-up”). The language in the letter is generally to the point. This indicates that the writer understands that the writing should be clear and direct so that the purpose and ideas of the letter are believable and easy for the audience to understand. The writer narrates for the transactive purpose—communicating effectively in the letter by attending to the audience’s need for purposeful and coherent writing. The writer demonstrates mastery of tone having written a letter that is polite and businesslike and appropriate to the purpose and audience (e.g., “As you know National Safety Week is coming soon...I am sure many students have wrote to you about this,” “I thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I really appreciate your patientence”).

The writing demonstrates reflective and analytical idea development. The writer provides specific, thorough support for all of the central ideas (e.g., “My first suggestion is to have faster practice drills. If we are not fast enough when practicing [drills] we will probably not be fast enough in the real thing . . . I suggest that we have drills at least twice a month . . . We should set a time limit. If we do not beat the time limit we should practice until we get close to or beat the time limit”). The preceding quotation from the letter is an example of careful idea development with relevant support.

The writer skillfully applies characteristics of the genre by including several elements that are customary to the informational letter genre. These characteristics include stating the purpose of the letter. The writer ensures that the audience will understand the purpose by stating “I am just giving some suggestions to make our school a safer place for the students.” Characteristics of the genre also include the politely written closing (last paragraph), in which the writer extends formal courtesies to the recipient (e.g., “I really appreciate your patientence”).

Annotation

3 Structure

The writer demonstrates logical and coherent organization. The writer puts a great deal of thought and effort into structuring and organizing the letter. By being conscientious, the writer ensures that the audience is able to follow the discussion as it moves from one topic or detail to the next. The writer identifies several problems at the beginning of the response and makes each of these the subject of a body paragraph. This organizational structure enables the writer to accomplish the transactional purpose of the informational letter genre by giving equal focus to each concern. The organizational structure also indicates that the writer understands that organization is an important element of good writing. The last two sentences of the first paragraph are somewhat superfluous, and these sentences slightly weaken the organization in that paragraph (e.g., “I am sure many students have wrote to you about this. I am just giving some suggestions to make our school a safer place for the students”).

The writer demonstrates logical transitional elements throughout. Specifically, the writer repeats words (“I am just giving some suggestions to make our school a safer place for the students,” “My first suggestion is to have faster practice drills”), rephrases ideas (“My first suggestion,” “My next concern”), and cites ideas in sequence (“My next concern,” “My last safety issue”).

The writer demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure. It seems apparent that the writer’s command of sentence structure will improve over time as opportunities to write informational texts and other genres occur. Specific problems in the response include an unparallel structure (“When they are picking up their child they can prove that is their child”) and a sentence fragment (“If for some reason the parent cannot come & pick up their child & they have to send a grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.”).

3 Conventions

The writer demonstrates control of grammar and usage relative to the length and complexity of the response. In some cases, the writer’s ability to express her ideas clearly is hampered by grammar and usage errors. Specific grammatical errors include vague pronouns such as “we” in the following example (“If we are not fast enough when practicing we will probably not be fast enough in the real thing”) and pronouns such as “that” rather than “this” (e.g., “I think that we should not have concrete hallways because they are very slippery & that can cause people to fall”) and “that” rather than “who” (e.g., “When they are picking up their child they can prove that is their child”).

The writer generally demonstrates acceptable word choice appropriate for the audience and purpose. The writer occasionally uses a general or broad-reference word rather than a specific word, which would have enhanced meaning and clarity, as in the use of “thing” rather than the word “event” (“we will probably not be fast enough in the real thing”). The writer demonstrates control of spelling, but the two errors in spelling are conspicuous (“concrete” and “patience”).

Dear Principal and staff,

I am going to tell about a problem at our school, that I think needs to be fixed. I think that the major problem that we have in our school happens on the bus. I think that every school has this problem. A lot of things happen on the bus. I think that the number one problem on the bus is that people are picking on others. When they try to stand up for themselves, the bullies don't back down. They try even harder to intimidate them. And when it doesn't work, they try to physically hurt them. Sometimes, they succeed. Most of the time the bus driver doesn't even realize that it's happening. Then the person gets scared. They get so scared of the bully that the person getting bullied can't even tell their best friend or friends what is happening to them. I think that the staff members should take turns riding on the bus and watching over the children.

Student Response

Score: 3-3-3

I also think that when the children get in school counselling should be a class with an actual grade. They should have this class three out of five days. They should also have a Bully class that tells the bullies that it is wrong to hurt other people and tell them wrong. Maybe even make video tapes and show it to the bullies. It might change their personality of their heart. If all of this happens, I think that it would be safer for children all over the world to ride the school bus to school and back to home.

Your Friend,

I hope your
school bus
ride is safer

3 Content

The writer establishes and maintains an authentic and focused purpose by identifying a safety issue at school at the beginning of the response and then writing about it with the conviction of one who has experienced it firsthand (“I think that the number one problem on the bus is that people are picking on others. When they try to stand up for themselves [students], the bullies don’t back down. They try even harder to intimidate them, And when it doesn’t work, they try to physically hurt them”).

The writing indicates an awareness of the audience’s needs. The tone in the writing is serious, and this is appropriate to the subject, purpose, and audience (the writer wants to provide important information to the principal of the school, one who has the power and authority to address the problem). The writer understands the audience’s need for the writing to convey a tone that is appropriate to the style of an informational text and the purpose of the letter (e.g., “I think that the major problem that we have in our school happens on the bus,” “It might change their personality of their heart”). The writer also understands the audience’s need for information to be clearly stated and well supported. The tone of the writing and the idea development with specific support both indicate an awareness of the audience’s needs. These elements also indicate the writer’s ability to communicate adequately in narrating for a transactive purpose.

The writing demonstrates depth of idea development with specific support (e.g., “I think that the number one problem on the bus is that people are picking on others,” “Most of the time the bus driver doesn’t even realize that it’s happening,” “I think that the staff members should take turns riding on the bus and watched over the children”). The response contains an insightful statement about the universality of bullying on school buses (e.g., “I think that every school has this problem”). The language in the response is occasionally redundant, particularly at the beginning of the letter. The redundant language is an obstacle to idea development because it takes the audience’s focus off of the central ideas in the letter (“I think that the major problem that we have in our school happens on the bus . . . Allot of things happen on the bus. I think that the number one problem on the bus is”).

3 Structure

The writing demonstrates logical and coherent organization. The response is a single lengthy paragraph containing a unifying central idea—the bus is an unsafe environment for students. The writing flows fairly successfully from sentence to sentence. This works especially well in the first half of the letter (e.g., “I think that the number one problem on the bus is that people are picking on others. When they try to stand up for themselves, the bullies don’t back down. They try even harder to intimidate them, And when it doesn’t work, they try to physically hurt them. Sometimes, they succeed”). The structure is less coherent and cohesive in the second half, where the writer lists actions the school might take (e.g., “They should have this class [counseling] three out of five days. They should also have a Bully class that tells the bullies that it is wrong to hurt other people”).

Annotation

The writer demonstrates logical and effective transitional elements by repeating words and phrases to connect ideas in the letter. Examples include “I think” (e.g., “I am going to tell about a problem at our school, that I think needs to be fixed,” “I think that every school has this problem”), “if” (e.g., “If all of this happens”), and “sometimes” and “most of the time” (e.g., “Sometimes, they [bullies] succeed [in intimidating students on the bus]. Most of the time the bus driver doesn’t even realize that it’s happening”).

The writer demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure relative to the grade level and the length and complexity of the response. The response contains errors in sentence structure, although, the errors do not interfere with communication. Errors include a sentence fragment and an unparallel structure (“Maybe even make video tapes and show it to the bullies,” “I think that the staff members should take turns riding on the bus and watched over the children”).

3 Conventions

The writer demonstrates control of grammar and usage relative to the length and complexity of the response. There are noun-pronoun agreement errors (e.g., “Maybe even make video tapes and show it to the bullies”) and prepositions (e.g., “It might change their personality of their heart,” “it would be safer for children all over the world to ride the school bus to school and back to home”). The writer uses determinates before nouns that do not need them (e.g., “I think that the staff members should take turns riding on the bus and watched over the children”). The writer frequently uses vague pronouns (e.g., “When they try to stand up for themselves, the bullies don’t back down”). The writer uses the word “get” incorrectly (“I also think that when the children get in school”).

The writer demonstrates acceptable word choice that is appropriate for the audience and the purpose. The writer uses simplistic words in some sentences where more descriptive words would make the writing more powerful (e.g., “Then the person gets scared. They get so scared at the bully that the person getting bullied can’t even tell their best friend or friends what is happening to them”). The writer uses sophisticated words appropriately and effectively (e.g., “They try even harder to intimidate them,” “they try to physically hurt them”). The writer demonstrates control of correctness. There are minor spelling errors (“Allot,” “counselling”). Punctuation is mainly correct; the writer demonstrates control of comma usage in complex sentences (e.g., “When they try to stand up for themselves, the bullies don’t back down”).

Student Response

Score: 2-3-3

Dear Mr.

This is my first year in school, and it has been great. But around the 3rd or 4th week of school I found a chicken spine in my chicken, it was very disgusting. I know this was not the lunch ladies fault, because they don't sit down and go through every chicken, they just cook it.

The next day of school I was going through the lunch line, and I saw mold on this roll. It was a big green dot on the side. This kid in front of me picked it up, and I told him it had mold on it. He gave it back to the lunch ladies, and they said it would not ever happen again. The day after that I was going through the lunch line and got my food, and went to my lunch table. I sat down and was about to take a bite of my roll, when my friend said stop. There it was again mold. I could have gotten sick from it. The lunch ladies told that kid and I that it wouldn't happen again, and it did. I took it back in there and they told me to get another.

Now you see Mr. that this is not a good thing, and I would like to sit down in peace and eat my lunch. I sure hope that you get this problem solved.

Sincerely,

Annotation

2 Content

The writer attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose by citing times when bad food has been served in the school cafeteria. It is customary in an informational letter to provide a statement of purpose to introduce the main topic. However the writer plunges ahead in the response, giving descriptive details prior to explaining the purpose of the letter; some lapses in focus occur as a result (e.g., “I found a chicken spine in my chicken. it was very disgusting,” “The next day of school I was going through the lunch line, and I saw mold on this roll”). Audiences other than the principal, who has inside knowledge of the school, may think the writer’s purpose is to complain about one or two events rather than to identify and describe a specific safety problem. The sentences in the last paragraph allude to the true purpose (e.g., “I sure hope that you get this problem solved”).

The writer indicates some awareness of the audience’s needs. The opening sentence is solicitous and complimentary; in it the writer informs the principal that “it [school] has been great.” The writer indicates some awareness of the audience’s needs through the description of events in the cafeteria (e.g., “I was going through the lunch line and got my food, and went to my lunch table. I sat down and was about to take a bite of my roll, when my friend said stop. There it was again mold”). These characteristics indicate some attempt to communicate with the audience.

The writing demonstrates some voice. The writer’s voice is apparent at the beginning of the letter when the writer expresses fondness for the school (e.g., “it has been great”), and at the end of the letter when expressing discontent about not being able to enjoy lunch (e.g., “I would like to sit down in peace and eat my lunch”). The writer’s voice is also apparent when the writer is describing encounters with bad food in the cafeteria. However, the tone of the letter is more informal and conversational than is typical of an informational letter for this purpose and audience.

The writing demonstrates some idea development with details; details support the idea that the food at school is bad. Some support is unelaborated and does not adequately explain the point that the writer is trying to make (e.g., “I found a chicken spine in my chicken. it was very disgusting. I know this was not the lunch ladies fault”). The first sentence is a clear and effective opening for the letter (“This is my first year [at the] school,” “it has been great”). The writer’s intention in the first sentence is to communicate to the principal that the bad food situation has not spoiled the writer’s school experience. The writer needs to develop this idea in more detail for it to be effective. The writing demonstrates some characteristics of the genre, including a salutation, a vague solution to the problem, a concluding sentence (“I sure hope that you get this problem solved”), and a closing (“Sincerely”).

3 Structure

The writing demonstrates logical, coherent organization. The letter contains three paragraphs; each paragraph serves a distinct purpose. The first paragraph introduces the audience to the writer and provides some information about the content of the letter. The second paragraph contains support and details. The third paragraph contains a simple conclusion. The writer ties the second paragraph to the first paragraph by continuing to describe the experiences he has had with bad food. The writer demonstrates effective transitional elements. The first and second paragraphs are connected by ideas (e.g., “I found a chicken spine in my chicken,” “I know this was not the lunch ladies fault, because they don’t sit down and go throug every chicken. they just cook it,” “The next day of school I was going through the lunch line, and I saw mold on this roll”).

The writer demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure with some errors that do not interfere with communication. The writer creates a dramatic effect by juxtaposing complex and simple sentences (e.g., “I sat down and was about to take a bite of my roll, when my friend said stop. There it was again mold”).

3 Conventions

The writing demonstrates control of grammar and usage, relative to length and complexity. Grammatical errors include using an incorrect determinator, “that” rather than “the,” and an incorrect conjunction, “and” rather than “but” (e.g., “The lunch ladies told that kid and I that it wouldn’t happen again, and it did”). The writer demonstrates acceptable word choice. The writer mainly uses simple words, but these words are generally appropriate for the purpose and audience (e.g., “great,” “disgusting,” “problem,” “solved”).

The writer demonstrates control of correctness relative to length and complexity. Punctuation errors include using periods instead of commas (e.g., “Sincerly.”) and omitting commas and quotation marks, as in the following example, where a comma is needed after the word “said” and quotation marks are needed around the word “stop” (“I sat down and was about to take a bite of my roll, when my friend said stop”). Two words in the response are misspelled (“throug,” “Sincerly”). There is one capitalization error (“I found a chicken spine in my chicken. it was very disgusting”).

Student Response

Score: 2-2-2

Dear princaple,

Have you ever slipped in the bath room and banged your head? If so you know how we worry about. The wet floors in the bath rooms are a safety hazard.

Just think of what could happen if someone were to slip and bang there head really hard! They could have to go to the hospital. And an injury wouldn't just be bad for the student it would be bad for the school to. Just think of how angry the parents could get.

So by drying the floors you could prevent many injuries and possibly prevent the suing of the school. And by that you could save more money.

And even prevent losing a student. Because without students the school would crumble like a cookie in milk.

So in conclusion make the floors dry in a flash and you'll save cash.

Sincerely, a concerned
student

Annotation

2 Content

The writer attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose. The writer believes that wet floors in the bathrooms are a safety hazard at school. After making an initial statement about wet floors in the first paragraph, the writer provides a disjointed discussion of the main idea with unelaborated support (e.g., “Just think of what could happen if someone where to slip and bang there head really hard! The could have to go to the hospital. And an injury wouldn’t just be bad for the student it would be bad for the school to”). The main idea relates directly to the writing prompt, and the details generally relate to the topic, but there are lapses in focus.

The writing demonstrates some of the writer’s voice. The writer’s voice is punctuated by specific statements of an adamant or humorous tone. It is difficult to know if these statements are intended to be humorous, or if the writer is simply attempting to emphasize a serious idea (e.g., “The wet floors in the bathrooms are a safety hazard,” “Because without students the school would crumble lik a cooky in milk”).

The writer attempts with limited success to narrate for a transactive purpose. The idea development in the response is mostly superficial; support for the main idea is unelaborated and, consequently, even the most relevant and insightful points are ineffective (e.g., “So by drying the floors you could prevent many injuries and possibly prevent the suing of the school. And by that you could save more money”). The first paragraph indicates that the writer can apply some characteristics of the genre. Specifically, in the first paragraph the writer addresses a question to the audience (“Have you ever slipped in the bathroom and banged your head?”), a transactive technique that is intended to get the audience’s attention.

2 Structure

The writing demonstrates logical organization with lapses in coherence. The writer begins to craft a logically organized response from the onset of the letter; the first sentence is a question to the audience (“Have you ever slipped in the bathroom and banged your head?”). Asking a question of an audience is a good rhetorical device to introduce a topic in an informational letter. The problem with the response is that it has only limited idea development; this contributes to lapses in coherence in the organizational structure of the letter (e.g., “Have you ever slipped in the bathroom and banged your head? If so you know how we worry about. The wet floors in the bathrooms are a safety hazard”). The response contains five short underdeveloped and loosely connected paragraphs; in the last paragraph, the writer merely alludes to the main idea and fails to reiterate or restate points that were made earlier in the response (e.g., “So in conclusion make the floors dry in a flash and you’ll save cash”).

The transitional elements are simple but effective (e.g., “If so,” “Just think,” “So,” “And,” “So in conclusion”). The writer demonstrates the ability to compose simple sentences. The writer attempts more complex sentences but lacks control of sentence structure. The writer occasionally

Annotation

juxtaposes simple and complex sentences. This technique provides the response with some rhetorical power (e.g., “So by drying the floors you could prevent many injuries and possibly prevent the suing of the school. And by that you could save more money”). Errors in sentence structure sometimes interfere with rhetorical power (e.g., “So by drying the floors you could prevent many injuries and possibly prevent the suing of the school. And by that you could save more money. And even prevent losing a student. Because without students the school would crumble lik a cooky in milk”). The writer does not appear to understand the difference between a complete sentence and a sentence fragment, as evidenced by the many incomplete sentences in the response.

2 Conventions

The writing demonstrates some control of grammar and usage that generally does not interfere with communication. Grammatical errors include a vague pronoun, “we,” an unnecessary preposition (“If so you know how we worry about”), and an incorrect predicate, “could have to go” rather than “would have to go” (e.g., “The could have to go to the hospital”). The writer demonstrates simplistic word choice, but the word choice succeeds in conveying the writer’s meaning.

The writer demonstrates some control of correctness with some errors that generally do not interfere with communication. The writer misspells simple words (“princaple” rather than “principal,” “where” rather than “were,” “there” rather than “their,” “cooky” rather than “cookie”). The writer exhibits some ability to use punctuation marks, specifically, question marks and exclamation marks. At the same time, the writer does not appear to understand comma usage. Commas are conspicuously absent in places where they are needed to separate ideas and to add pauses (e.g., “So in conclusion make the floors dry in a flash and you’ll save cash”). The writer’s lack of comprehension of complete sentences may explain mistakes in period usage (e.g., “And by that you could save more money. And even prevent losing a student”).

Student Response

Score: 2-1-1

Dear principal

AS you now

the have to be in
the old building while 7th & 8th graders
get to go into the new building where
it's clean but we at least want to have
no leftovers at lunch & no big brown cockroaches &
have new desk with no gum plus at
lunch do you now how many people
pucked & got sick these couple weeks
a lot of people plus I think it's
nasty. Please a health hazard to have nasty
mold in the bathroom & stuff yuck!
the lunch ladies don't even give the
time to wash the plates & silverware
& on the desk there's sharp ends
from sawing off the sides. It's sharp
enough to cut a pencil & sharpen
it! & what I scares me the
most is the construction
workers that walk around
with saws, hammers & blades
every day & worse a stray

Student Response

Score: 2-1-1

dog came & no one, got it & we
had to walk by it & I hate
the nasty smell of the old building.
All I'm asking is please quicken
the construction so were in the
old building faster!!

Thanks

2 Content

The writer attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose, but there are some lapses in focus. The central idea in the response seems to be that conditions at the old school building are generally intolerable. The writer pleads with the principal to do everything possible to speed up construction on the new school building. The writer does not provide a main idea statement to inform the audience of the letter's content. The absence of a main idea leaves the audience to guess at the writer's purpose in the letter. The writer plunges into a discussion, hurriedly listing a series of complaints that leaves the audience wondering how these complaints relate to each other or to the purpose of the passage (e.g., "we at least want to have no leftovers at lunch & no big brown cockroaches & have new desk with no gum plus at lunch do you now how many people pucked & got sick these cople weeks").

The writer demonstrates some awareness of the audience's needs and makes some attempt to communicate. The writer does this by addressing the letter to the principal, the intended audience, and referring to the principal as one who is aware of events at the school (e.g., "As you now [know]"). Details enhance communication by depicting the situation for students at the school (e.g., "What I scares me the most is the construction workers that walk around with saws, hammers + blades"). The writing demonstrates some writer's voice, but the writer's voice is sporadic, usually emerging when the writer expresses shock or indignation (e.g., "I hate the nasty snele it the old building").

The writing demonstrates some idea development with unelaborated support. The details relate to the idea of a safety problem that exists at school, but support for this idea is random and unelaborated (e.g., "we at least want to have no leftovers at lunch & no big brown cockroaches," "the lunch ladies dont even give the time to warsh the plates & silverware"). The writer eventually lists enough details so that the audience can deduce the main idea and purpose of the letter. The writer applies some characteristics of the genre by including a salutation to the audience ("Dear Principal") and by addressing the audience again at the end of the letter ("all Im asking is please quicken the construction so were in the old building faster!!").

1 Structure

The writing demonstrates weak organization. The opening salutation, first sentence, final sentence, and closing are the only organizational elements in the letter. The writing consists of several long run-on sentences; there are no paragraph breaks. The writing demonstrates limited and ineffective transitional elements. The writer uses the word "Plus" in an attempt to connect ideas ("Plus I think its nasty. Pluse a health hazerd"). The writer uses transitional phrases (e.g., "& What I scares me the most," "all Im asking"). The writing demonstrates incorrect sentence structure throughout the response. The writer's ability to communicate is severely constrained by his or her lack of understanding of sentence structure. The response contains many run-on sentences (e.g., "& What I scares me the most is the construction workers that walk around with saws, hammers & blades every day & wonse a stray dog came & no ounse got it & we had to walk by it & I hate the nasty snele it the old building").

Annotation

1 Conventions

The writer demonstrates lack of control in grammar and usage. Many of the grammatical errors overlap with sentence structure errors (e.g., “we at least want to have no leftovers at lunch & no big brown cockroachs & have new desk with no gum plus at lunch do you now how many people pucked & got sick these cople weeks a lot of people”). The writer makes usage errors involving simple words such as “get” (e.g., “While 7th & 8th graders get to go into the new building”). The writing demonstrates incorrect and inappropriate word choice (e.g., “pucked,” “yuck”).

The writer demonstrates lack of control in correctness. There are many spelling errors in the writing. Many simple words are even misspelled: “cople” rather than “couple,” “desck” rather than “desk,” “pensile” rather than “pencil.” The writer exhibits limited control of punctuation. Punctuation marks are nearly absent from the response. The lack of punctuation in the response causes run-on sentences and unparallel structures to occur. Several sentences have exclamation marks as end punctuation, but the writer’s intention in these cases may be to emphasize points rather than to punctuate sentences correctly. A comma is missing after the word “Thanks” in the closing. The writer uses some correct capitalization (e.g., “Dear Principal,” “As you now”).

Student Response

Score: 1-1-1

Dear Principale,

We are learning about saftey this week. We have to focus about saftey issues at our school and I think we need hall monoters so we wont fall and hurt our self I see people ran and fall all the time. The hall monoters could say slow down and walk. The hall monoter could be the monoter for a day and the could switch off with someone els. If is really important to not run in the halls.

Annotation

1 Content

The writer attempts to establish a general purpose by identifying running in the halls as a safety problem at school. The response lacks focus mainly because the writer does not provide relevant details to support the assertion that running in the halls is an urgent problem the principal must address. The writer begins the letter by restating the prompt (“We are learning about safety this week. We have to focus about safety issues at our school”). It is customary in an informational letter for the writer to explain the purpose for writing. The writer may be attempting to attend to the audience’s needs and to apply a characteristic of the genre by restating the prompt. However, the writer’s attempts fail because the idea development in the response is limited and support for it is weak. These problems prevent the writer from succeeding in narrating for a transactive purpose.

1 Structure

The writing demonstrates weak organization. The response is a single paragraph that begins with a vague and redundant introductory statement (“We are learning about safety this week. We have to focus about safety issues at our school”). The writer identifies a safety problem and provides several brief details (“I think we need hall monitors so we won’t fall and hurt ourselves”). There is a concluding sentence (“It is really important to not run in the halls”). The letter contains a salutation (“Dear Principale”), but not a postscript. The writer is unsuccessful at narrating for a transactive purpose because the response lacks structure and idea development.

The writing demonstrates limited transitional elements (e.g., “and”). The writer repeats words to transition between ideas (e.g. “The hall monitors could say slow down,” “The hall monitor could be the monitor for a day”). The response contains some ineffective sentence structures. Sentences lack coherence, rhythm, and rhetorical effect. There is an awkward compound sentence (“We have to focus about safety issues at our school and I think we need hall monitors so we won’t fall and hurt ourselves”).

1 Conventions

The writer lacks control of grammar and correctness. Grammatical errors include an incorrect pronoun, “ourselves,” and an incorrect tense (“I see people ran and fall”). The writing demonstrates ineffective word choice. The writer’s message lacks rhetorical power because of ineffective word choice. The writer misspells several polysyllabic words (“Principale,” “safety,” “monitors”), but spells simple words correctly. Punctuation errors include omitting the apostrophe from a contraction, “won’t,” and a period from the end of a sentence (“We have to focus about safety issues at our school and I think we need hall monitors so we won’t fall and hurt ourselves”).

Student Response

Score: 0-0-1

obey your principle when she's going
over safety rules and do them right and
don't get off here's the rules, emergency, fire
drills, lockdown Tornado drill, earthquake drill,

Annotation

0 Content

The writing lacks purpose. The writer makes a vague statement about how students must follow safety rules at school. The writer asserts that students should obey the principal and follow safety rules at school, but does not explain how not following them creates a safety hazard. The writing lacks idea development. The response is merely a brief list of what to do and not to do (“obey your prinsple when shes going over safty rules and do theme right”). The lack of idea development indicates that the writer is unaware of the audience’s needs. The writer demonstrates a lack of ability to communicate effectively and to narrate for a transactive purpose.

0 Structure

The writing demonstrates random organization. The response does not contain either an introduction or conclusion. The writing lacks transitional elements. The writing demonstrates incorrect sentence structure. The writer lacks the ability to write simple and complex sentences. The response is a single run-on sentence with three independent clauses that are connected by the coordinator “and.”

1 Conventions

The writing demonstrates lack of control in grammar and correctness. The response lacks punctuation and capitalization (e.g., “obey your prinsple when shes going over safty rules”). The response is hampered by spelling errors (e.g., “safty,” “tormatodrill”). The word choice is ineffective. The writing is mostly incoherent because of the convention errors.

Grade 5 Multiple Choice

This part of the test contains three reading selections with a total of twelve multiple-choice questions. Please mark your answer for each multiple-choice question in the space provided in your Student Response Booklet (Writing – Part A). Mark only one answer for each question. If you do not know the answer, make your best guess.

DO NOT WRITE ANY ANSWERS IN THIS TEST BOOKLET. WHEN YOU FINISH, DO NOT WORK ON ANY OTHER PART OF THE TEST.

Paula is writing a personal narrative about her experience playing baseball. Paula wrote a first draft. Now she needs help revising and editing it. Read Paula's draft and answer the questions that follow.

Better the Second Time Around

1 When I first moved here last spring I hadn't played a lot of baseball. I played at the park in
2 my new neighborhood a month ago, but I struck out twice and dropped a ball in the outfield.

3 Then, last Saturday, some kids are playing ball at the same park. My brother suggested I join
4 them.

5 "Nah, I'm no good," I said.

6 "What do you mean?" he asked.

7 "I'm just no good," I repeated.

8 My brother went into his room to get a bat, a ball, and a couple of mitts. All that afternoon he
9 taught me how to hit the ball, catch it, and run the bases. It really helped me a lot.

10 It was time to prove what I had learned, so I went to the park.

11 The first pitch was a strike, but I didn't swing. I could hear the catcher laughing to himself
12 and see the pitcher smiling. I took a deep breath and then stared back at him. Now I was ready.

13 The pitcher threw again. I swung, and this time the fat part of the bat met the ball squarely.
14 The ball headed toward the outfield. The shortstop leapt into the air, but the ball was too high to
15 catch.

16 "Yes!" I yelled as I ran to first base.

17 After I made it safely to first, I looked back. My teammates looked shocked—but they were
18 cheering!

Mark your answer choices for multiple-choice questions 1 through 4 in the spaces provided in your Student Response Booklet (Writing – Part A).

1. Choose the correct way to write the underlined part of this sentence from line 3.

Then, last Saturday, some kids are playing ball at the same park.

- A. were playing
- B. will be playing
- C. have been playing
- D. No change is needed.

2. Paula wants to add more detail to the paragraph that begins with line 8. Choose the BEST sentence to follow the sentence below.

All that afternoon he taught me how to hit the ball, catch it, and run the bases.

- A. My brother is older than I am.
- B. He taught me not to be afraid of the ball.
- C. The afternoon sun was hot.
- D. My dog barked and chased the ball.

3. Choose the BEST word to begin this sentence from line 10.

_____ it was time to prove what I had learned, so I went to the park.

- A. Besides,
- B. Always,
- C. Thankfully,
- D. Finally,

4. Paula wants to add this sentence to the paragraph that begins with line 11.

Then it was my turn to bat.

Choose the BEST place to add this sentence.

- A. at the beginning of the paragraph
- B. after the first sentence
- C. after the second sentence
- D. at the end of the paragraph